

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00

PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01

PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-15 ACDA-19 IO-15 OMB-01 AID-20 DPW-01

DRC-01 /128 W

----- 061874

O P R 101126Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7307

SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE

INFO CINCPAC PRIORITY

USSAG NKP

13TH ADVON UDORN

UNCLAS BANGKOK 15850

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, MARR, TH

SUBJECT: PRIME MINISTER THANOM ON U.S. MILITARY PRESENCE IN
THAILAND/FORCE REDUCTIONS

1. THE FOLLOWING IS AN UNOFFICIAL USIS TRANSLATION OF EXCEPTS
FROM PRIME MINISTER THANOM'S CONFERENCE OF OCTOBER 10.

2. BEGIN EXCERPTS

GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN: KHUN BANYAT OF "BANGKOK POST" ASKS ABOUT
THE NEWS REPORT FROM WASHINGTON WHICH STATES THAT FURTHER WITH-
DRAWALS OF MILITARY FORCES FROM THAILAND WILL BE POSTPONED
TEMPORARILY UNTIL THE UNITED STATES HAS MADE A DEFINITE
DECISION ON THE STRENGTH OF ITS MILITARY FORCES TO CONTINUE
BEING STATINED IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES. SHE ASKS FOR DETAILS
AND SHE ASKS WHETHER THE WITHDRAWAL OF AMERICAN MILITARY FORCES
FROM THAILAND DEPENDS ON DECISION MADE BY THE UNITED STATES ONLY,
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OR WHETHE THERE ARE OTHE REASONS THAT HAVE TO BE CONSIDERED

JOINTLY?

THANOM: IN REGARD TO THE RUMOR THE FURTHER WITHDRAWALS OF AMERICAN MILITARY FORCES WILL BE POSTPONED TEMPORARILY, IT WAS ASSERTED AT THE LAST MEETING HELD BETWEEN THAI AND AMERICAN OFFICIALS THAT THE AGREEMENT ON THE WITHDRAWAL OF MILITARY FORCES WILL BE CARRIED ON. MEASURES ARE ALSO BEING TAKEN TO REMEDY VARIOUS PROBLEMS CONCERNED, SUCH AS GUARDS, AND REGARDING WORKERS WHO ARE THAIS.

MEETINGS AND CONSULTATIONS BETWEEN THAI AND AMERICAN OFFICIALS WILL CONTINUE TO BE HELD. AT PRESENT, ACTIVITIES ARE BEING CARRIED ON TO COMPLETE IN FULL THE FIRST AND SECOND WITHDRAWALS OF AMERICAN MILITARY FORCES. WHEN AND TO WHAT STRENGTH FURTHER WITHDRAWALS WILL BE, BOTH SIDES HAVE AGREED FOR THEIR REPRESENTATIVES TO JOINTLY ASSESS THE SITUATION, AND THE THREAT MENACING FROM THE OTHER SIDE, AS THE BASIS FOR THE DRAFTING OF PLANS ON THE GRADUAL REDUCTION OF AMERICAN MILITARY FORCES IN THAILAND IN THE FUTURE. IN THE MEANTIME, MEETINGS AND CONSULTATIONS ARE BEING HELD REGULARLY BETWEEN OFFICIALS OF THE TWO GOVERNMENTS. THAILAND IS A COUNTRY THAT POSSESSES SOVEREIGNTY IN FULL, THEREFORE IN THE WITHDRAWAL OF AMERICAN MILITARY FORCES THE FINAL DECISION DEPENDS ON THE DECISION REACHED BY THE THAI GOVERNMENT ONLY. WHEN DETERMINING THE STRENGTH OF AMERICAN MILITARY FORCES WHICH SHOULD BE STATIONED IN THAILAND. JOINT CONSULTATIONS WILL BE HELD TO CONSIDER THE NECESSITY OF THE SITUATION AS THE MAIN BASIS OF DECISIONS MADE, IN ORDER TO FEEL FULL CONFIDENCE IN THE STABILITY AND SECURITY OF THAILAND AND OF SOUTHEAST ASIA. THIS IS OUR RIGHT, AND WITHDRAWALS DO NOT DEPEND ON DECISION MADE BY THE UNITED STATES ONLY.

REPORTER: YOU SAID JUST NOW THAT OFFICIALS OF BOTH SIDES WILL HOLD A MEETING ORDER TO ASSESS JOINTLY THE SITUATION IN THIS REGION WHEN WILL THIS MEETING START?

THANOM: WE HOLD MEETINGS REGULARLY AND CONTINUALLY, WITH NO INTERRUPTION AT ALL.

REPORTER: WHEN WILL RESULTS BE KNOWN?

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THANOM: WHEN ASSESSMENT OF THE SITUATION SHOWS THAT THERE IS LESS DANGER MENACING WE REDUCE AMERICAN MILITARY FORCES STEADILY. IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO SPECULATE WHEN THERE WILL NO LONGER BE ANY DANGER. LOOK AT THE SITUATION IN NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES AND YOU WILL SEE HOW IT IS CHANGING CONTINUALLY, DAILY, IMPROVING AT TIMES AND DETERIORATING SOME TIME,

REPORTER: WHEN ADMIRAL GAYLER COMES HERE WILL TALKS BE HELD

WITH YOU ON THE WITHDRAWAL OF AMERICAN MILITARY FORCES?

THANOM: DO YOU MEAN ON WHAT SUBJECT ADMIRAL GAYLER WILL HOLD TALKS WHEN HE MEETS ME? SINCE NEGOTIATIONS ARE BEING HELD ALREADY REGARDING WITHDRAWAL OF MILITARY FORCES FROM THAILAND,

THERE IS NO NEED TO HOLD FURTHER TALKS ON THE SUBJECT WITH ADMIRAL GAYLER, THERE ARE COMMITTEES OF BOTH SIDES HOLDING TALKS REGULARLY.

REPORTER: DOES ASSESSMENT OF THE SITUATION IN THIS REGION AT PRESENT SHOW THAT THE SECURITY CONDITION OF THAILAND AND THIS REGION IS SUFFICIENT FOR AMERICAN MILITARY FORCES TO BE COMPLETELY WITHDRAWN?

THANOM: MY VIEW IS THAT THEY CANNOT BE COMPLETELY WITHDRAWN YET. IN LAOS, FOR INSTANCE, THOUGH AGREEMENT WAS REACHED TO SET UP A COALITION GOVERNMENT IT HAS NO BEEN SET UP YET. THE COMMUNISTS HAVE NOT SENT THE LIST OF NAMES OF ITS MINISTERS AND DEPUTY MINISTERS YET. AT THE SAME TIME, PATHET LAO FORCES ARE SEIZING MORE TERRITORY STEADILY ESPECIALLY IN AREAS ADJOINING THE BORDER WITH THAILAND. ALONG THE BANK OF THE MEKONG RIVER, NEARLY THE WHOLE AREA FROM PAKSAME DOWN TO THAKHAEK HAS BEEN SEIZED BY AND IS IN THE HANDS OF THE COMMUNISTS. THE SITUATION IN SOUTH LAOS, WHICH ADJOINS UBON RATCHATHANI PROVINCE, IS ALMOST ENTIRELY IN THE HANDS OF THE COMMUNISTS ALSO. THE PATHET LAO IS SENDING ADDITIONAL FORCES INTO AREAS ADJOINING THE NORTHERN REGION OF THAILAND.

REPORTER: IN THIS THE REASON WHY MILITARY FORCES CANNOT BE WITHDRAWN?

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THANOM: IT HAS TO BE CONSIDERED JOINTLY. LOOK AT CAMBODIA, WHICH IS ANOTHER COUNTRY THAT HAS A COMMON BORDER WITH THAILAND, AND YOU WILL SEE HOW THE SITUATION THERE IS CHANGING CONTINUALLY.
END EXCERPTS
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 10 OCT 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973BANGKO15850
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: BANGKOK
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19731042/aaaabesd.tel
Line Count: 160
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: thigpegh
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 03 DEC 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <03-Dec-2001 by bryansd0>; APPROVED <05-Feb-2002 by thigpegh>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PRIME MINISTER THANOM ON U.S. MILITARY PRESENCE IN THAILAND/FORCE REDUCTIONS
TAGS: PFOR, MARR, TH
To: STATE DOD
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005